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Taking Flight – September 2016 Edition

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Taking Flight – September 2016 Edition

Message from the Dean

We revised and re-launched an important class this year. It's called "Introduction to Business," and it targets new students in the College. A committee of faculty led the effort; they were convinced we could do better. So, they benchmarked the competition, studied best practices, attended some conferences and designed a cutting-edge course that is both substantive and engaging. I am very proud of those folks and proud of the work they continue to do.



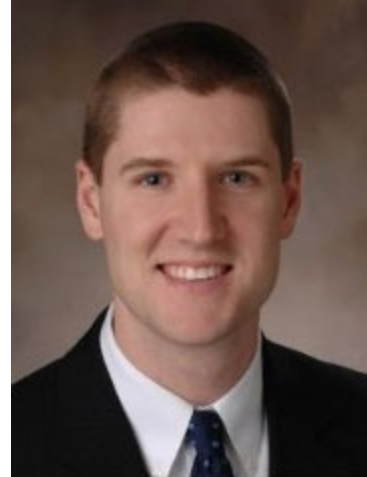
I mention this because it illustrates a principle I raise every time I speak to the Introduction to Business students. The principle is this; to win big you must do the little things right. I'm sure Coach Summers would agree. You win championships by winning games; you win games by executing on every play; and you execute by doing all the little things right. Whether in sports, business, or academia, the principle is the same; do the little things and do them well, and good results will follow.

So, I'm excited about the new course and the value it offers our students. But, I'm even more excited about what the course represents. We are doing the little things, and we're doing them well. Whether it's innovation in the classroom, expanded offerings for travel abroad, our new entrepreneurial incubator and maker space, more partnerships with the business community, or greater engagement with the alumni network, we are executing on the little things and building towards a great future!

Handwritten signature of the Dean.

Alumni Spotlight – Charles Heller

Charles Heller (FINC, 2008) is an associate director, senior credit review officer in the U.S. Credit Review Department of Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) located in New York City. RBC is the largest financial institution in Canada. Its investment banking subsidiary, RBC Capital Markets, is a Top 5 Investment Bank in North America. The U.S. Credit Review Department provides management and the board with an independent assessment of the quality of the U.S. Branch credit portfolio, credit underwriting processes and related credit administration functions. The department ensures loans booked in the U.S. are properly underwritten in accordance with internal policy, regulatory guidance and industry standards. In his role as a senior credit review officer, Charles conducts and helps manage the reviews of different portfolio segments. Prior to joining RBC, he served as a financial institution specialist at Steve H. Powell & Company (Statesboro, Georgia) and a consulting risk advisory supervisor at RSM US LLP—formerly McGladrey, LLP (Chicago). The best part of his job is helping clients in the areas of consulting and risk management, especially when he sees the immediate impact of his department’s work on the bank as a whole.



While at Georgia Southern, Charles tutored statistics, quantitative analysis and finance, which helped develop the teaching and training skills he relies upon daily in his job. Knowing he was entering into the banking industry upon graduation, Edward H. Sibbald’s (retired director, Center for Excellence in Financial Services) banking classes were among Charles’s favorites and did an excellent job of preparing him for his future. Sibbald’s final bank analysis project, which focused on being able to give an overall assessment of a bank’s financial condition—including asset quality, earnings and capital adequacy—was directly relative to Charles’s upcoming career. In his finance classes, John Hatem, Ph.D. and professor of finance, provided daily explanations of the monumental events transpiring during the beginning of the Great Recession. Charles declares he will never forget these eye-opening explanations. He also has fond memories of his encounters with William Wells, Ph.D. and associate dean. As both a student and tutor, Charles often had the privilege of listening to Wells’s humor and wit interspersed with an added touch of sarcasm. He found Wells to be an incredible teacher and a great mentor. Charles credits networking with and developing relationships with the Georgia Southern College of Business faculty members with obtaining an internship with Steve H. Powell & Company prior to the start of his senior year at Georgia Southern, an instrumental starting point of his career.

Working for a leading investment bank in New York City was Charles’s goal since he first decided to major in finance early in his college career. Staying focused on that goal as he dedicated himself to

learning the banking industry, first, while working in Statesboro, and later in Chicago, was always important. A career in consulting provides a unique opportunity to advise clients as an industry expert; however, early in his career, Charles had to quickly overcome any reservations about presenting to clients who were substantially more senior in their careers than he was. Charles overcame that challenge by being well prepared and confident while surrounding himself with other, more experienced professionals in the firm. He quickly determined that consulting is a team-oriented industry and knowing that each team member brings his or her own unique expertise makes the team as a whole better and provides the client with the best possible product.

In August of 2015, Charles earned a Masters of Finance from Pennsylvania State University, and he is especially proud to have been invited to speak at the Pacific Bankers Bank Tactical Banking Conference in Chicago in October 2014 and to have been asked to host the May 2016 College of Business Eagles on Wall Street. He strongly encourages future students to take advantage of this, as it allows students to see first-hand what a career in the big city is like.

Outside of work, Charles enjoys golfing, swimming, exploring the greatest city in the world and reading in Central Park. He is also a volunteer teacher for at-risk youth throughout the five boroughs of New York City. Charles finds teaching youth is such a rewarding activity that, as he continues to grow his career at RBC, he plans to seek out additional teaching opportunities.

A Family Tradition: One Son Follows in his Entrepreneur Father's Footsteps

by Julia Fechter, The George-Anne Staff

Statesboro restaurant R.J.'s Grill was set to close on Sept. 4. The restaurant, located on South Main Street, had been open for 35 years.

However, local restaurant owner Stacy Underwood purchased R.J.'s from owner Randy Nessmith in August, therefore sparing the restaurant from closing its doors. Underwood took over ownership of R.J.'s on Sept. 1.

Underwood's son, John Underwood, aspires to work in the restaurant business like his father. John is a 2014 Statesboro High School graduate and junior finance major at Georgia Southern University.

Building the businesses

Stacy Underwood owns Statesboro restaurant Uncle Shug's Chicken Barn, Uncle Shug's Bar-B-Q Place in Brooklet and Ronnie's Restaurant in Savannah in addition to R.J.'s.



John Underwood primarily helps with the catering aspect of R.J.'s, which is a big part of the restaurant. He helps transport the food into the catering vans and deliver it to different clubs and businesses.

"It [R.J.'s] has been different. It's the first true sit-down place with waitresses and stuff. It's a little different menu than fried chicken and hamburgers," John Underwood said.

While John does help out at R.J.'s, he is primarily interested in taking over Uncle Shug's Chicken Barn.

"I either run orders out or I cook hamburgers and cook chicken. I do a little bit of everything, whatever they need," John Underwood said.

He prefers to work at the chicken barn because it is easier to produce the chicken products.

"My interest is more with the chicken barn, trying to make that business grow. I want to maybe make a few more locations and see how big we can get it," John Underwood said. "I feel like it's a concept that you can copy. You can have more than one location and copy it."

Underwood first became interested in Uncle Shug's back in January. He saw that the restaurant was a good business and opportunity as he grew personally and thought more about possibly owning it.

Underwood has assisted his father with Uncle Shug's Chicken Barn since his childhood.

"I used to help him out a lot whenever he was at West Main for the original location [of Uncle Shug's]. I used to help him in there, and I've always helped. I used to go in before school and go ahead and help him get breakfast ready," John Underwood said.

Now, Underwood will continue to work under his father for a few years before he moves up in the family business.

"My father and father-in-law were in the restaurant business. I was very delighted whenever John said he was interested in the restaurant business. It's like carrying on a family tradition," Stacy Underwood said.

Understandably, most of Underwood's time and energy have been focused on the newly-acquired R.J.'s. While the staff there has helped him get acquainted with the restaurant, people at his other businesses have also helped him out.

"He [John] has got my back from hanging out at Uncle Shug's and working there. My people at Uncle Shug's, Ronnie's, and the barbeque place down there, all those people stepped up and helped me. They knew I couldn't be everywhere," Stacy Underwood said.

Encouraging local food fare

According to John Underwood, his father could not imagine a Statesboro without R.J.'s Grill.

"Whenever he decided to go ahead and get it, I was happy for us and I feel like it'd be a good thing, and make a lot of other people happy, too," John Underwood said.

Many loyal customers of R.J.'s thanked Stacy Underwood for purchasing the restaurant. The people working there were also very appreciative of him sustaining R.J.'s.

"R.J.'s was about to close down, and they were losing their jobs. When they lose their jobs, they're losing their income. They were going to have to go out and find another job," Stacy Underwood said.

Restaurants like R.J.'s can also be meaningful to Statesboro as a whole, not just to R.J.'s customers and employees.

John Underwood said, "They [local places] help define us. That's what makes towns unique, different restaurants that are owned by local people. You get a taste of different cities. This [R.J.'s] is a landmark of Statesboro."

Eagle Executive Society – Student Chapter

The Eagle Executive Society-Student Chapter held its first meeting of the year, a new member social, on Thursday, September 1. Despite severe weather that forced the University to close on Friday, around 65 students came to listen as the board of the Eagle Executive Society presented what the organization is about, the benefits of membership and a list of events planned for the semester. Upcoming programs include Stan Suboleski, Ph.D., assistant professor of management, speaking about his industry experience in hotel and restaurant management, a panel discussion during Professional Development Day with Paul Newman and Vik Sasser, members of the College's Young Alumni Board, a résumé and cover letter workshop, "How to be a Millionaire . . . In College" by Shannan Dawda, who was recently named one of the University's 40 Under 40 and a member of the College's Young Alumni Board, and the annual golf etiquette outing.

To get involved with the Eagle Executive Society, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/business/eexs.



BIG Opens Innovation Incubator and FabLab

Area businesses and entrepreneurs now have access to office and meeting spaces, computers and software, 3-D printers and other tools through the [Georgia Southern University Business Innovation Group's](#) Innovation Incubator and Fabrication Laboratory (FabLab) located in downtown Statesboro at the University's City Campus.

A grand opening celebration was held Friday, September 9, 2016, for the new facility in downtown Statesboro, where guest speakers included State Rep. Jan Tankersley (R-Brooklet), Statesboro Mayor Jan Moore, University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D., and Statesboro City Councilman Phil Boyum.



(l-r): Statesboro City Councilman Phil Boyum, Georgia Southern President Jaimie Hebert, State Rep. Jan Tankersley (R-Brooklet), Statesboro Mayor Jan Moore, Director of BIG Dominique Halaby, Dean of the College of Business Allen Amason

"These resources are available to anyone—from a person with a home-based business idea from Candler County to the existing businesses or forward-thinking students here in Statesboro to the thriving and growing businesses and individuals in the Savannah area and the entire Coastal region," said Hebert. "All of this makes BIG a useful and vital place to plant, nurture and harvest the entrepreneurial spirit. That entrepreneurial spirit—that idea of taking your own idea and with support and resources, growing it into something larger than it would have been —is exactly the same kind of spirit, the same kind of culture that exemplifies Georgia Southern."

The event also featured tours of the facility and demonstrations of different machinery and programs offered in the makerspace and incubator.

"The idea that this is now in place demonstrates for rural America [that] anything is possible. The services you'd normally find in larger urban areas or at institutions like Georgia Tech are now right here in Statesboro and at Georgia Southern," said Dominique Halaby, director of the Business Innovation Group. "Just in the FabLab component, we have 3-D printing of various types, so anyone can come in and manufacture anything that they can imagine, but we also have laser cutters, woodworking equipment and lots of other tools that you might not have in your house, but you can have access to right here in this space."

The space provides many benefits to entrepreneurs and small businesses in the region that may not have access to designated office space. In addition to providing access to meeting rooms and shared office equipment including printers, wireless networks and other business tools, the FabLab and Innovation Incubator also provide places for those creative thinkers and innovators to seek

business advisement, coaching and leadership assessment, business consulting and technical assistance, training classes and much more.

"As we open our doors, we are changing the entrepreneurial ecosystem for the region and initiating opportunities for all innovators, creators, thinkers and dreamers to turn their ideas into reality," said Suzanne Hallman, business advisor for Business Innovation Group.

The Innovation Incubator and FabLab are a joint venture between Georgia Southern University, the Downtown Statesboro Development Authority, City of Statesboro, Statesboro Arts Council and the Economic Development Administration. In addition, the incubator is associated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)-established Global FabLab Network. The incubator is designed to create sustainable jobs, increase the number of local businesses and improve and diversify the economic drivers in coastal Georgia.

'A Day for Southern' Campaign Benefits Students, Connects University to Community

Georgia Southern University had another successful year with the annual A Day for Southern (ADFS) giving campaign, held on Tuesday, September 13. Now, in its 43rd year, the one-day campaign raised \$1,945,416. This is the 19th year A Day for Southern has raised more than \$1 million.



Ashley Hines Ellis (FINC, 1992), ADFS Chair

"At Georgia Southern, academics and student successes are, and will always be, our primary mission," said University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D. "A Day for Southern provides a wonderful opportunity for Georgia Southern and the Statesboro-Bulloch County community to come together to celebrate our strong partnership and help to ensure the continued success of our programs and community outreach, and, most importantly, our students."

Just ask Dylan John and Aleya Rentz— two Georgia Southern students who have directly benefitted from funds raised during A Day for Southern.

Dylan John is a student with international ties who has benefitted from the campaign. A native of Sri Lanka, John came to America to study, and he completed his undergraduate degree in May 2016 at Georgia Southern, where he is continuing his studies in applied engineering while also serving as the University's Student Government Association president.

"As an international student from Sri Lanka, studying in the United States of America has not been easy," he said. "Besides not being able to understand some of the lingo, the language, and what

you call 'biscuits' and I call 'cookies,' there are also other challenges—financial constraints, challenges of foreign exchange rates, growing living expenses and other financial obligations. However, I was blessed—blessed by those who supported and willingly give, and blessed by those who encouraged others to give.”

John went on to say he initially flunked out of high school in Sri Lanka, but, through scholarships made possible by ADFS, he was able to bounce back and pursue his academic passions.

Aleyna Rentz, a Bainbridge, Georgia, native, University Honors Program student and scholarship recipient, credits support from A Day for Southern for helping in the pursuit of her educational dreams.

Dreaming of studying abroad was something that excited Rentz, but, as one of seven children, “the idea of spending the summer in another country at my parents’ expense while my siblings stayed home struck me as kind of selfish,” she said.

“But I decided to apply for the Honors Program Study Abroad Scholarship, and, if I worked hard on the application essay, I figured maybe it would work out. As it turns out, I was right,” she continued. “That May, I packed my suitcase for two weeks in Ireland for the inaugural Honors Inquiry in Ireland Study Abroad Program.

“I didn’t think I’d get to study abroad at all, but, thanks to a scholarship on behalf of the University Honors Program, I was able to conduct and present research to an international audience—all as a freshman.”

“Every day ... I get to come to this wonderful campus and prepare for [my] future ... all because of the generosity of donors and fundraisers whose gifts should remind us that scholarships don’t just fund educations, they fund dreams.”

Not only does the campaign benefit the members of the Georgia Southern campus community, it also connects Georgia Southern with Statesboro, Bulloch County and the surrounding areas.

Statesboro and Bulloch County businesses, along with Georgia Southern faculty, staff, retirees and alumni, donated to the campaign as a way to show their support for the University. The gifts received support University programs not fully funded through state dollars, allow students to achieve academic excellence, and support outreach centers such as the Center for Wildlife Education, the Georgia Southern Museum, the Garden of the Coastal Plain and state-of-the-art facilities and programs that attract and support research and scholarships.

“It is such an honor to serve as the chair of A Day for Southern this year. Georgia Southern University has been an integral part of this community since its inception,” said Ashley Hines Ellis (FINC, 1992), executive vice president of BBWH Insurors in Statesboro. “Not only does Georgia

Southern have a direct impact on the economics of our community, but it certainly adds to the quality of life we've all grown to cherish here in Statesboro.

"Statesboro is thriving, and Georgia Southern has played a big role in making Statesboro what it is today. The partnership between Statesboro and the University is vital to both entities," Ellis continued. "We understand that, through collaboration and shared goals, there's not much we can't accomplish. I'm proud to be a Georgia Southern University alumna and grateful for the education I received that prepared me for my career."

Ellis, a leader in the community, is also a graduate of the 2000 Leadership Bulloch class and served as its 2012 chair. She also is a graduate of the Southeast Leadership Georgia Program and a graduate of the Georgia Economic Development Academy.

Supporters of A Day for Southern are encouraged to give to the areas at the University for which they are most passionate, whether it is a scholarship fund, a college within the University, athletics or one of a variety of student programs and services. Gifts, no matter the size, may be made year-round.

To designate your gift to a College of Business fund, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/business/donate for the List of College of Business Giving Opportunities.

Accounting's Annual Meet the Firms

by Tim Pearson, Ph.D., director of the School of Accountancy

The recruiting process for accounting students begins early in the fall each year with employers looking to lock in accounting talent for their firms. Many accredited Schools of Accountancy host at least one "Meet the Firms" event each year. This event is the launching event for recruiting season for our students looking for positions in public accounting firms and similar employers. The recruiters are often searching for both interns and full-time opportunities, so students need to do their research on each employer to understand what the firm is looking for in a potential hire.

At our most recent event on Wednesday, September 14, 2016, the School of Accountancy hosted 21 organizations at "Meet the Firms." The event was a tremendous success as nearly 200 students attended and networked with the employers' representatives. Not every firm recruiting our students was able to attend the event on the date, so we helped by sharing their firm's materials and contact



information. In addition, most employers make presentations in classes and to student organizations to help the students better understand their firm.

Company representatives attending "Meet the Firms" include professionals in accounting, finance and consulting. The individuals representing firms on campus include new hires, seasoned employees and senior executives, partners and principals. The firms often have HR professionals represent them. The networking opportunities are invaluable.

Students are fortunate that the faculty provide some coaching on being prepared for the event: professional dress, body language, proper etiquette in networking, making a good first impression, delivering an elevator pitch and résumé writing. We are very grateful for Career Services and our alumni for assisting in this important effort.

One critical point we emphasize to our students is that the sooner prospective employers get to know the students and remember them, the easier it will be for our students to secure a job before graduation. Every person our students meet and every conversation they have will increase their opportunities of obtaining and succeeding at interviews.

Attending "Meet the Firms" is an important step in the recruiting process for our accounting students. Although students might be intimidated at first, as they attend more events, they become more comfortable talking with professionals. Therefore, it is critical for all accounting students to get a head start in the recruiting process.

As you read this article, numerous accounting firms have been scheduling on-campus events and interviews. In some cases, the firms have already been here and are making the employment decisions. Students who stand out can expect to make office visits with the hope for an internship or full-time job offer to follow.

"Meet the Firms" is a recurring tradition that highlights the quality of our accounting programs at Georgia Southern. The reputation of our program and graduates in the field is validated by the number of quality firm recruiters competing for our students. As director, I have to express my gratitude for the impact the faculty have in the lives of our students. The faculty go above and beyond to support our students academically and enhance the quality of their professional polish as they pursue employment opportunities.

College of Business Hosts First Tailgate of the Season

On Saturday, September 17, 2016, the College of Business hosted the first tailgate of the season when the Georgia Southern Eagles football team took on the University of Louisiana Monroe Warhawks at Paulson Stadium. Alumni and friends of the College enjoyed chicken fingers, hot wings, mac and cheese, coleslaw and cookies, while reconnecting and networking. The game, a nailbiter, ended with an Eagles win, with a score of 23-21. The Eagles, now 3-1 overall and 2-0 in the conference, will be on the road for the next four games. The next home game will be against App. St. on Thursday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m., and the next College of Business home tailgate will be held before the Homecoming game on Thursday, November 10, 2016, when the Eagles football team hosts the Ragin' Cajuns from the University of Louisiana Lafayette.



Latest Results for Georgia Business Climate Survey Suggest Georgia Business Leaders are Optimistic about Future of Georgia

The Georgia Southern University Business Innovation Group (BIG) and *Georgia CEO* have partnered to establish a new Georgia Business Climate Survey, which will serve as a tool for viewing how the state is moving forward economically. Distributed on a quarterly-basis, the survey will cover various types of questions regarding the business industry specifically, the economy as a whole, the business industry's propensity to hire new staff and investments in capital.



This quarter's survey analysis suggests that survey participants are cautiously optimistic about the future of Georgia's economy. When asked directly about their outlook on Georgia business conditions over the next three months, 42 percent of participants thought conditions would be better in three months while 46 percent thought business conditions would be the same.

When asked about their outlook on the next three months, business leaders were the most optimistic about business volume and sales and the most anxious about capital access, profitability and labor availability.

Right now, 75 percent of survey participants do not think they will do more business out-of-state than what they are currently doing. Overall, only 21 percent are planning on expanding their out-of-state business activities in the next three months.

Thirty-two percent of survey participants work for companies that employ less than nine people, while 24 percent of participants work for companies that employ more than 250 people.

"Survey participants are cautiously optimistic about the current and future state of the economy," stated Ben McKay, research specialist for the Georgia Southern Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development (BBRED). "This is a night and day difference when these findings are compared to similitude research conducted by BBRED shortly after the crash of 2008."

The sampling technique used for this study was a convenience sample of subscribers to one of the nine *Georgia CEO* daily newsletters. The locations served by this publication include Albany, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Middle Georgia, Newnan, Savannah and Valdosta. Participants were contacted via email and responded using a provided link to an online questionnaire. The survey was open for two weeks and collected 368 valid responses. Due to the sampling technique used, it is unclear what the response rate to this survey is, and the results are not representative of the views of the entire population of Georgia. The results do reflect the views of many readers of *Georgia CEO*.

For more information, contact Ben McKay at bpmckay@georgiasouthern.edu. For the full survey results, contact Randy Davidson with *Georgia CEO* at randy@georgiaceo.com.

VBOC Update

On July 1, the Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) was launched to assist veterans in Region IV, covering all of Georgia and much of South Carolina start, sustain and grow their own businesses.

To assist in that goal, the VBOC recently hired two veterans who will conduct outreach to local veterans and veteran and other community organizations and transition assistance programs at area military installations.

Jeremy Horstman is now the director of the VBOC. Jeremy is a veteran of both Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) and Iraqi Freedom and is currently a major and UH-60 Blackhawk Pilot in the Georgia Army National Guard. He also recently served as an assistant professor of Military Science, teaching ROTC at Georgia Southern University.



Jeffrey Smith is a business consultant for the VBOC. Jeff is a 24-year veteran of both the U.S. Army and Army Reserve, having served in the first Gulf War in Saudi Arabia. He also served in Germany and Egypt and was active in security operations in New York City immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In his civilian career, Jeff has worked in public accounting and as a consultant on corporate taxation.

Jeremy and Jeff are looking forward to helping veterans realize their goals as entrepreneurs. They will be based at the Georgia Southern University City Campus in downtown Statesboro.

For more information about the VBOC at Georgia Southern City Campus, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/big/big-programs/vboc.

True Blue **TAILGATE** *at Georgia Tech*



- Tickets sold in advance: \$35*
- Includes: one dinner plate and 4 drink tickets
- Parking not included.
- Children 5 and under FREE
- Deadline to purchase tickets:

Friday, October 7, 2016 at 5 p.m. EST

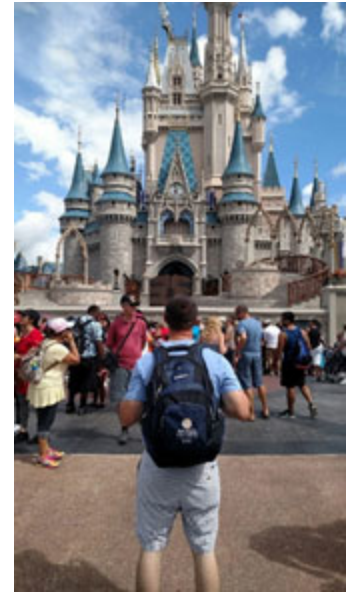
For more info, go to bit.ly/gsgt2016

*Subject to sell out! Limited to 500 tickets.

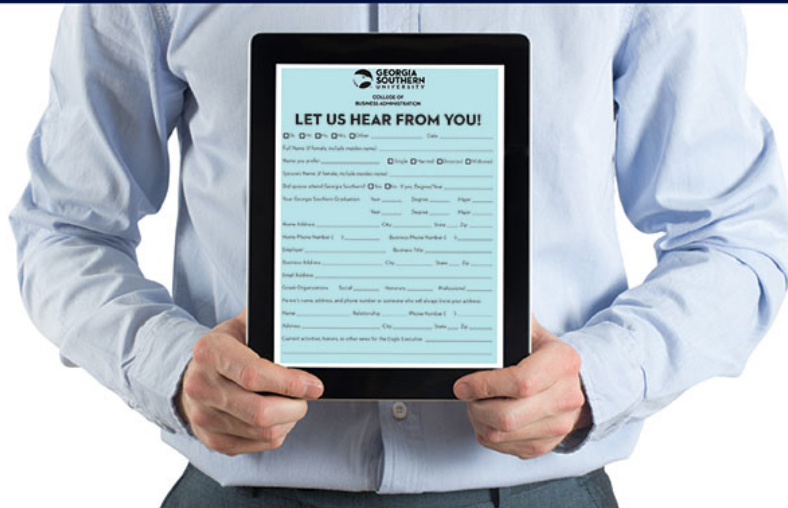
Backpack Travels

Recently, one of our MBA backpacks showed up at the Magic Kingdom at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Where will you take your College of Business backpack?

Don't forget to share with us pictures of you with your backpack on vacation on Facebook ([gasouthernbusiness](https://www.facebook.com/gasouthernbusiness)) or Instagram ([@gsbusiness](https://www.instagram.com/gsbusiness)). If you'd like to order a backpack, please visit [the GS Business Marketplace](https://www.gsbusiness.com/marketplace).



KEEP US INFORMED
OF WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU



Alumni! Remember the “Blue Cards” Lewis Stewart used to send out? They are now online.
Help us stay in touch with you by visiting

GeorgiaSouthern.edu/Business/BlueCard

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

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